The International market for basic agricultural food items like cereals, dairy products, meat, sugar etc. is constrained by not only tariff and non-tariff barriers but also by the massive subsidies granted by the USA, EEC etc.

The removal of non-tariff barriers and reduction of subsidies in the industrialised countries under the WTO Agreement are expected to open up new market opportunities for countries like India so as to enable us to increase the share of agricultural and allied products in the country's total export basket.

It is the policy of the Government to allow the export of items of mass consumption in such a manner that it does not compromise the food security of the country. It is with this objective in mind that Government prescribes restrictions like licensing, quantitative ceilings and minimum export price on certain items. At the same time, Government's objective is to maximise foreign exchange earnings from the agricultural sector to the benefit of the farmers

The steps taken to enhance export of agricultural and allied products include simplification of inspection procedures, removal of Minimum Export Price and quality restrictions on selected items, provisions of concessional credit, product development to meet international needs, extension of benefits available under the scheme of EOUs/ EPZs to agriculture sector and permitting 50% sale in the domestic tariff area, assistance to exporters for improved, packaging, strengthening of quality control, promoting export of identified products through brand promotion campaigns, arranging buyer-seller meets and participation in international fairs/exhibitions.

Cost Audit of Companies Books of Accounts

3666. SHRI RAMSAGAR : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to refer to the reply given to unstarred Question No. 2119 dated December 15, 1993 regarding "statutory cost audit of toiletries" and state:

(a) whether the Government have issued orders to audit the books of accounts of the companies under Section 233 B of the Companies Act, 1956;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of companies whose account books were audited to find out if any of them have resorted to charging excessive profits, misutilisation of imports during the last two years; and

(d) the details of such companies and the outcome of the audit thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) and (b) The Government has issued orders to audit the books of accounts of 24 Companies, as given in the enclosed statement which manufacture Cosmetics & Toiletries.

(c) The audit orders as referred to above portion to financial year 1995-96 and as per rules the companies can submit their audit reports upto 27th September, 1996 in respect of these orders. The details of charging excessive profits or misutilisation of imports, if any, would be known only after the audit reports for the year 1995-96 are received and examined.

(d) Does not arise.

STATEMENT

List of companies in respect of which the Government has issued Cost Audit Order

1. Been Cham India Pvt. Ltd.
2. Bengal Chemicals & Pharmaceuticals Ltd.
3. Burroughs Welcome & Company Limited
4. Colgate Pamolive India Limited
5. Crooks Interfran Limited
6. Dabur (India) Limited
7. Duphar Interfran Ltd.
8. Godrej Soaps Ltd.
9. H.M.M. Ltd.
10. Helen and Curtis Ltd.
11. Hindustan Level Limited
12. Infar India Limited
13. J.B. Advani and Co. (Mysore) Ltd.
14. J.L. Morison (India) Ltd.
15. Johnson and Johnson Co. Ltd.
16. Lakme Limited
17. Martin and Haris Ltd.
18. Muller and Phipps (India) Ltd.
19. Perid's India Ltd.
20. Right Aids (Orient) Pvt. Ltd.
21. Smith Stainee Street and Co. Ltd.
22. Swastik Household and Industrial Products Ltd.
23. The Calcutta Chemical Co. Ltd.
24. Tips and Toes Cosmetics (India) Ltd.